



Australian Church

Women



WORLD
COMMUNITY
DAY

October, 1968



Theme:

Human Rights

Prayer to be offered by the leader of those participating in the service, when all are gathered together beforehand in the vestry:

From Martin Luther's Sacristy Prayer:

"Lord God, Father in heaven, I am altogether unworthy of the office and service wherein I am to publish Thy glory and nourish and tend this congregation. But since Thou hast appointed me, so be my helper . . . Let it please Thee through me to accomplish something to Thy glory and not to mine or to the praise of men . . .

Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, send Thy Holy Spirit to be with me in this work; yea to work in me, Thy will and purpose through Thy divine power." AMEN.

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WORLD COMMUNITY DAY

Theme: HUMAN RIGHTS

On December 10th, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. 1968 has been declared Human Rights Year to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of this declaration.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Responses by Congregation in italics.

Leader: O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! Who hast set Thy glory above the heavens . . . When I consider Thy heavens the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained;
What is man that Thou art mindful of him; and the Son of Man that Thou visitest Him?
For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.
O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!

PRAYER OF INVOCATION:

Leader: Almighty God, creator of the world that we know . . . Maker of the farthest star in space . . . Designer of the minutest atom . . . We praise and thank You that You are not only a God of Power, but a God of Love.
God, our Father, we thank You for Jesus Christ, the expression of Your perfect love in human form; . . . and we thank You for Your Holy Spirit, continuously at work in this, Your world.
Draw near to us, as we come to You.
Take not your Holy Spirit from us.
Our Father, who art in heaven . . .

AMEN.

HYMN: Glory be to God the Father.

(Tune: Regent Square)

(Those presenting the offering of the Least Coin should bring it forward during the last verse of the Hymn. Congregation remain standing.)

Glory be to God the Father,	Glory to the King of angels,
Glory be to God the Son,	Glory to the Church's King!
Glory be to God the Spirit,	Glory to the King of Nations!
Great Jehovah, Three in One!	Heaven and earth, your praises bring;
Glory, glory,	Glory, glory,
Glory, glory,	Glory, glory,
While eternal ages run!	To the King of Glory bring!
Glory be to Him who loved us,	"Glory, blessing, praise eternal!"
Washed us from each spot and stain!	This the choir of angels sings;
Glory be to Him who bought us,	"Honour, riches, power, dominion!"
Made us Kings with Him to reign!	Thus its praise creation brings;
Glory, glory,	Glory, glory,
Glory, glory,	Glory, glory,
To the Lamb that once was slain.	Glory to the King of Kings!

Leader: As we come, women of all denominations of the Christian Church, we remember before God our sisters in other parts of the world. We bring this day the offering of the Least Coin which is the token of our faithfulness. We now dedicate this offering to God.

Prayer (in unison): *O God, our loving Father, accept these gifts of prayer. As You were able to use the widow's mite, so now use our least coins in the service of the needy around the world. As You have promised to be with two or three gathered in Your name, so now come into the hearts of this congregation. AMEN.*

FIRST READER: Genesis Chapter 16 v. 1 - 13 a.

SECOND READER: Matthew Chapter 10 v. 29 - 31 & Galatians 3:26 - 28.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

Leader: O God, our Father, we praise and thank You for the truth of the Gospel: That each human being is known unto You . . . "Thou, God, seest **me**."

We thank You, our Father.
That no one can circle out of Your orbit . . .

We thank You, our Father.
That You speak Your word to each individual heart . . .

We thank You, our Father.
That Your love has made us all members of Your family . . .

We thank You, our Father.
That You have placed us in human communities, with families and friends . . .

We thank You, our Father.
That in Christ there are no barriers of race, nationality, language and creed . . .

We thank You, our Father.
That we live in this scientific age, with its possibilities of making "one world" a reality . . .

We thank You, our Father.
That You have placed us in Asia, with its rich variety of human achievement and its great potential resources . . .

We thank You, our Father.
That You have called us into Your Church to be instruments of Your peace . . .

We thank You, our Father. AMEN.

THIRD READER: Amos Chapter 8: v. 1 - 7 & Ch. 5: v. 21 - 24.

(Phillips' translation is preferred—"Four Prophets")

FOURTH READER: Matthew 25 v. 31 - 45.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

Leader: O God our Father, we acknowledge that we have not always lived by the truth of the Gospel, and we are sorry:

We have sometimes acted as though we were Your "special children" . . .

Forgive us, our Father.

We so easily forget those we cannot see . . . our orbit is so small and self-contained . . .

Forgive us, our Father.

We too readily assume that Your will is known only to us in the Church . . . and yet we so often turn a deaf ear to Your voice . . .

Forgive us, our Father.

We have failed to fully accept as brothers and sisters those who are aggressive, or ugly, or ignorant, or just "different" . . .

Forgive us, our Father.

We have sometimes turned **our** family, **our** club, **our** community, **our** race, and even **our** church into an idol . . .

Forgive us, our Father.

With the barriers of race and class all down, we feel too exposed: we run to the security of "our language", "our culture and customs", "our nationality", "our sort of people" . . .

Forgive us, our Father.

Our faith is too small for the responsibilities and challenges of our modern, "one world" . . .

We acknowledge all the unloving and unlovely things in our lives that hinder You from using us for the saving of the world . . .

(Silence for one minute.)

Forgive us, our Father.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You and worthily magnify Your Holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

HYMN: Dear Lord and Father of Mankind (Tune: Rest).

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind;
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow Thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
The silence of eternity,
Interpreted by love!

With that deep hush subduing all
Our words and works that drown
The tender whisper of Thy call
As noiseless let Thy blessing fall
As fell Thy manna down.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease,
Take from our souls the strain and stress
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind
and fire,
O still small voice of calm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

OFFERING: For Refugee Relief through Inter-Church Aid.

DEDICATION OF OFFERING:

Leader: Accept, O Father, these, our gifts, and accept us as we offer ourselves anew in Your service. We ask this in Jesus' name. AMEN.

ADDRESS: (Optional). This should be on the theme of Human Rights.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:

Leader: O God, our Father, You know the needs of each one of Your children. Draw near to each of those whom we name before You now . . .
For those who have lost their way in life; for those who worship the things that You have made and have forgotten You, the Maker . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those who live with loneliness; for the bereaved . . . for the deserted partner of a marriage, left to bring up a family alone . . .
for those cut off from normal human contact . . . for prisoners . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those who see their children go to bed hungry each night . . .
for those who cannot find work . . . for the homeless and all refugees . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those who are forced to face difficulties and carry heavy burdens: for migrants in a strange land . . . for chronic invalids and pensioners . . .
for the sensitive and highly-strung . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those who go in fear of their lives; or suffer for conscience's sake . . .
for those who live under an oppressive government . . . for those who live in a society divided by racial discrimination . . . for Australian aborigines treated as second-class citizens . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those who have been treated as less than human . . . for those who have never known human love . . . for those who have lost all self-respect . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those who have sinned and are ashamed . . . for those who have sinned and are unashamed . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those who judge harshly and talk self-righteously . . . for those who are filled with hate and prejudice . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those who write what many read and speak what many hear . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those who are called to leadership and exposed to the temptations of power . . . in their nation . . . in their Church . . . in decisions of peace and war . . . in the United Nations . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those who hold the fabric of society together by faithfully doing an ordinary job with cheerfulness each day . . . for those who seek to humanize society in our "Machine Age" . . .
Hear us, our Father.
For those called to minister to others . . . to care for the sick . . . to visit the lonely . . . to bring food to the hungry . . . and hope to the despairing . . .
Hear us and meet all their needs with Your grace and Your guidance and Your strength, O God, our Father. AMEN.

HYMN: O God of mercy, God of might. (Tune: Elmshurst).

O God of mercy, God of Might,
In love and pity infinite,
Teach us, as ever in Thy sight,
To live our life to Thee.

And Thou, who cam'st on earth to die
That fallen man might live thereby,
O hear us, for to Thee we cry,—
In hope, O Lord, to Thee.

Teach us the lesson Thou hast taught,
To feel for those Thy blood hath
bought,

That every word and deed and thought
May work a work in Thee.

For all are brethren, far and wide;
Since Thou, O Lord, for all hast died;
Then teach us, whatsoe'er betide,
To love them all in Thee.

In sickness, sorrow, want or care,—
Whate'er it be, 'tis ours to share;
May we, where help is needed there
Give help as unto Thee.

And may Thy Holy Spirit move
All those who live, to live in love,
Till Thou shalt greet in heaven above
All those who give to Thee.

BENEDICTION:

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. AMEN.

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QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

It is suggested that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights be used in conjunction with these questions. This is available from the United Nations Office in your State.

1. What is the basis for affirming that each human being is uniquely valuable? What has the Christian faith to add to this?
2. Freedom from Fear and Freedom from Want are basic to the right of each human being to his life and livelihood. Do you think we Australians are complacent about these rights, because we personally have security and plenty to eat? What should we do about the needs of others who lack security and livelihood?
3. In your local community are there any people you know who have less than full human rights? What is our responsibility to them?

The Service has been prepared by the Presbyterian Women's Association of Australia and produced by Australian Church Women, C/- Victorian Council of Churches, 100 Flinders Street, Melbourne.

The Australian Church Women was established by the Australian Council of Churches, to co-ordinate the work of women in the member churches throughout Australia. It operates through the State Units and prepares two services annually, Fellowship Day on the fourth Wednesday of July, and World Community Day on the fourth Friday of October. The Australian Church Women encourages support of the Women's World Day of Prayer, and promotes the Fellowship of the Least Coin. Through the Committee on Co-operation of Men and Women in Church, Family and Society, it is linked with the Department of this name in the World Council of Churches in Geneva.